(c) The Government is implementing a number of Schemes for the development of the handloom sector, with a view to promote product diversification, provide marketing support and technological upgradation. The main developmental Schemes are Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana, Integrated Handloom Technology Project, Marketing Promotion Programme, Mill Gate Price Scheme, Handloom Export Scheme and 10% Special Rebate on Sale of Handloom Products.

Effect of increase in **the minimum support price for cotton**

1413. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent increase in the minimum support price for cotton has triggered an increase in cotton prices in domestic markets;

(b) with a bumper global cotton crop and resultant glut in global cotton market, whether the price of cotton in global market is likely to come down; and

(c) whether despite a good domestic harvest this year, the import of cotton would turn out to be cheaper?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): {a) Inspite of increase in the Minimum Support Price of *Kapas* (seed cotton) for the current cotton season 2004-05, domestic market prices of *kapas* are ruling lower than the prices prevailed during the corresponding period last year.

(b) Cotton prices in global market during the current cotton year are also ruling lower than the prices prevailed during the corresponding period last year. The Cotlook A' Index, a measure of international cotton prices, is expected to average 48 US Cents per Pound during 2004-05, as against the average cotton price of 68.3 US Cents per Pound during 2003-04.

(c) At present domestic cotton price is lower than the landed price of equivalent variety of imported cotton. The Cotton Advisory Board has estimated the import of cotton at 5 lakh bales during the current cotton year 2004-05 as against the import of 6.5 lakh bales during the 2003-04 cotton season.